

House Resolution 705

By: Representatives Geisinger of the 48th, Wilkinson of the 52nd, Lindsey of the 54th, Amerson of the 9th, Franklin of the 43rd, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the unveiling of the General John Brown Gordon
2 memorial statue on the grounds of the state capitol; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, remarking on the unveiling ceremony of Saturday, May 25, 1907, when the
4 equestrian statue of General John Brown Gordon was opened to a vast throng of attendees
5 at the state capitol, the *Atlanta Constitution* wrote, "Never before have the capitol grounds
6 been so packed with an animated mass of humanity as that gathered around the Gordon
7 monument yesterday"; and

8 WHEREAS, General John B. Gordon, whose sobriquets include "the hero of the
9 Appomattox," was one of Georgia's greatest soldiers, lawyers, journalists, railroad executives,
10 and statesmen who served as a commander in the Civil War, a three time United States
11 Senator, and Governor of Georgia from 1886 to 1890; and

12 WHEREAS, even though Gordon had no military experience previous to the Civil War, he
13 was elected captain of his company of mountaineers and rose through the Confederate ranks
14 with lightening speed, rising to the rank of Major General following the Battle of Spotsylvania
15 Court House in 1864; and

16 WHEREAS, at six feet tall, Gordon had austere features, black hair, and a striking profile as
17 "straight as a sword blade and just as wide," and his imposing soldierly bearing and
18 galvanizing voice made him an inspirational officer equaled by few; and

19 WHEREAS, as a field commander, General Gordon combined intelligent strategy with an
20 audacious bravado that proved irresistible to the soldiers in his charge, and President Theodore
21 Roosevelt remarked that "a more gallant, generous, and fearless gentleman and soldier has not
22 been seen by our country"; and

23 WHEREAS, immediately following the war, General Gordon was a champion of reunification
24 efforts who sought aggressively to heal the wounds of war and to remove sectional

1 antagonisms; and as the leader of the United Confederate Veterans, he advocated a patriotism
2 that could "cherish the past glories of the dead Confederacy and transmute them into living
3 inspirations for the future service to the living republic"; and

4 WHEREAS, General Gordon embodied the living ideals of an era, and after he passed away
5 peacefully at his winter home in Miami, his body was placed in the center of the state capitol
6 rotunda, where the gathered crowd was so massive that two lines had to be formed at the
7 capitol doors; and

8 WHEREAS, in 1906, the General Assembly appropriated \$15,000 in addition to the more than
9 \$10,000 collected by the Gordon Monument Association and other contributors to erect a
10 commemorative statue of General Gordon to be executed in bronze by sculptor Solon H.
11 Borglum, the brother of the artistic mastermind behind Mount Rushmore, Gutzon Borglum;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Solon Borglum, who studied in Paris and at the Cincinnati Art Academy and
14 whose works are in collections at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the University of Iowa,
15 the Detroit Institute of Art, and the National Gallery of Canada, submitted a final design that
16 boldly depicts the General as a dignified statesman astride his warhorse; and

17 WHEREAS, the unveiling ceremony in Atlanta was met by such a crowd that young men and
18 boys perched on convenient telephone poles "like so many blackbirds," as speeches were
19 given by General Clement A. Evans, Captain Tip Harrison, Colonel Nat Harris, and the
20 Honorable Joe Hill Hall; "Sunny South" was performed by a choir of 100 voices; and a poem
21 was performed by Governor Joseph M. Terrell who commented that the ceremony was an
22 "epoch-making" occasion; and

23 WHEREAS, General Gordon was admired throughout the South as well as the North as a man
24 who symbolized the greatest virtues of his homeland, and his memorial at the state capitol
25 remains one of the State of Georgia's finest monuments.

26 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
27 the members of this body honor the memory of one of Georgia's finest leaders, General John
28 Brown Gordon, and express their sincere appreciation for his memorial statue on the occasion
29 of its 100th anniversary.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
31 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Georgia Capitol Museum.